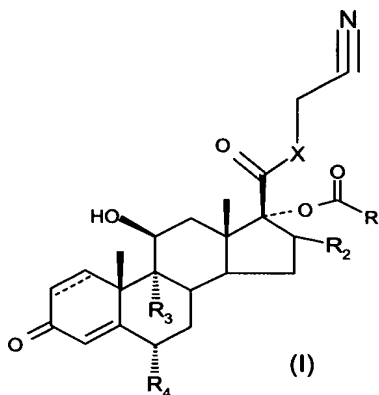


Amendments To The Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

What is claimed is:

1. (Original) A compound of formula (I):



wherein

X represents O or S;

R₁ represents C₁₋₆ alkyl, C₃₋₈ cycloalkyl, C₃₋₈ cycloalkylmethyl or C₃₋₈ cycloalkenyl any of which optionally may be substituted by one or more methyl groups or halogen atoms or R₁ represents aryl, substituted aryl, heteroaryl or substituted heteroaryl;

R₂ represents hydrogen, methyl, which may be in either the α or β configuration, or methylene;

R₃ and R₄ are the same or different and each independently represents hydrogen, halogen or a methyl group;

and --- represents a single or a double bond;

or a physiologically acceptable salt or solvate thereof.

2. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 1 wherein X represents O.

3. (Currently Amended) A compound as claimed in claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ wherein R₁ represents a C₃₋₆ cycloalkyl group optionally substituted by one or more methyl or chlorine groups.

4. (Currently Amended) A compound as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 wherein R₁ represents 2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropyl.
5. (Currently Amended) A compound as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein R₂ represents methyl in the α -configuration.
6. (Currently Amended) A compound as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein R₃ and R₄ are both fluorine.
7. (Currently Amended) A compound as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 wherein ~~-----~~ represents a double bond.
8. (Currently Amended) A compound as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 which is
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;
17 α -(4-[(Diethylamino)sulphonyl]benzoyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;
17 α -(5-Chloro-4-methoxy-thiophene-3-carbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;
17 α -(Cyclohexylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(2,6-difluorobenzoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-17 α -(4-methoxybenzoyl)oxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;
17 α -(4-Cyanobenzoyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;
17 α -(Cyclopentylmethylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(3,3-dimethylbutanoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-17 α -(2-isopropyl-1,3-thiazole-4-carbonyl)oxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(quinoline-2-carbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(5-trifluoromethyl-furan-2-carbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl -17 α -(5-methylsulphonyl-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl -17 α -(5-methylthio-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester; 6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(5-ethyl-isoxazole-3-carbonyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

9 α -Fluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 β -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester.

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androst-4-ene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(5-Chloro-4-methoxy-thiophene-3-carbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl -3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester; 17 α -(Cyclohexylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl -17 α -(5-methylsulphonyl-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S- cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(5-trifluoromethyl-furan-2-carbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester; or

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(3-(difluoromethylthio)benzoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester.

9. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 8 which is

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

9 α -Fluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 β -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(Cyclohexylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(Cyclopentylmethylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(3,3-dimethylbutanoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(3-(difluoromethylthio)benzoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(Cyclohexylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(5-ethyl-isoxazole-3-carbonyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-17 α -(5-methylthio-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-17 α -(2-isopropyl-1,3-thiazole-4-carbonyl)oxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;

17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester; or

17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester.

10. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 9 which is
17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester;
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid S-cyanomethyl ester; or
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester

11. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 10 which is
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid cyanomethyl ester.

12. (Currently Amended) A compound of formula (I) as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1 or a physiologically acceptable solvate thereof for use in veterinary or human medicine.

13. (Currently Amended) Use of a compound of formula (I) as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1 or a physiologically acceptable solvate thereof for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of inflammatory and/or allergic conditions.

14. (Currently Amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of formula (I) as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1 or a physiologically acceptable solvate thereof together, if desirable, in admixture with one or more physiologically acceptable diluents or carriers.

15. (Currently Amended) A pharmaceutical aerosol formulation comprising a compound of formula (I) as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1 or a physiologically acceptable solvate thereof, and a fluorocarbon or hydrogen-containing chlorofluoro carbon as propellant, optionally in combination with a surfactant and/or a cosolvent.

16. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 15 which further comprises another therapeutically active agent.

17. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 16 in which said another therapeutically active agent is a β_2 -adrenoreceptor agonist.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for the treatment of a human or animal subject with an anti-inflammatory and/or allergic condition, which method comprises administering to said human or animal subject an effective amount of a compound of formula (I) as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1 or a physiologically acceptable solvate thereof.

19. (Original) A compound
which is 17 α -(4-[(Diethylamino)sulphonyl]benzoyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(2,6-difluorobenzoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-17 α -(4-methoxybenzoyl)oxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid
17 α -(4-Cyanobenzoyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(3,3-dimethylbutanoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-17 α -(2-isopropyl-1,3-thiazole-4-carbonyl)oxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(quinoline-2-carbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(5-trifluoromethyl-furan-2-carbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl -17 α -(5-methylsulphonyl-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl -17 α -(5-methylthio-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(5-ethyl-isoxazole-3-carbonyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid

17 α -(5-Chloro-4-methoxy-thiophene-3-carbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl -3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid

17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carboxylic acid

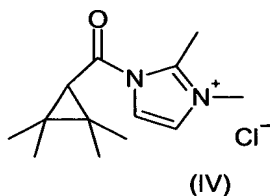
17 α -(2,2-Dichloro-3,3-dimethylcyclopropylcarbonyl)oxy-6 α ,9 α -difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl
-17 α -(5-methylsulphonyl-thiophene-2-carbonyl)oxy-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid

6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-17 α -(5-trifluoromethyl-furan-2-carbonyl)oxy-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid, or

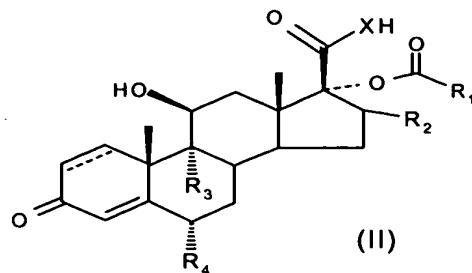
6 α ,9 α -Difluoro-17 α -(3-(difluoromethylthio)benzoyl)oxy-11 β -hydroxy-16 α -methyl-3-oxo-androsta-1,4-diene-17 β -carbothioic acid.

20. (Original) A compound of formula (IV):

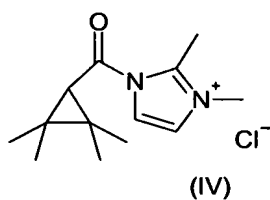


2,3-dimethyl-1-[(2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropyl)carbonyl]-1*H*-imidazol-3-ium chloride.

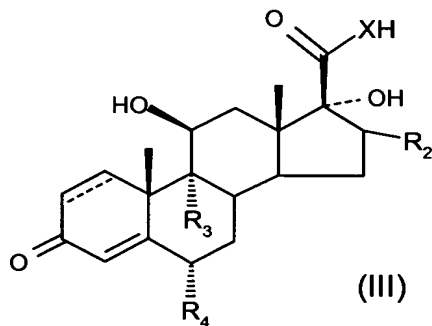
21. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a compound of formula (II)



where R_1 represents 2,2,3,3 – tetramethyl cyclopropyl and R_2 , R_3 , R_4 , X and --- are as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1 which process comprises reaction of the 1,2-dimethyl-1*H*-imidazolium ester of 2,2,3,3-tetramethylcyclopropane carboxylic acid (IV)



with the corresponding 17 α -hydroxyl derivative of formula (III)



22. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 21 in which X represents O.